

## THE INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM AMENDMENT.

**T**HE ABOVE CAPTION is the title of a small circular letter sent out to voters by the Civic League of the State of Washington, and expresses the opinion of that League touching a very important amendment on which the people will be asked to vote next Tuesday.

It is with pleasure that the Editor of The Times gives substantial endorsement to the following declarations as set forth by said League:

"The Initiative and Referendum is direct legislation by the citizens of the state as distinguished from legislation through chosen representatives.

"Initiative and Referendum exists today in a few states of the Union. It has proved itself the tool of any special interest desiring to further its selfish ends.

"The experiences of the above states show that direct legislation results immediately into rule of the minority. The bulk of the public, not being able to fully understand the measures to be voted upon, remain silent while the initiators of the measures, with a little organization, are able to pass them.

"Unintelligent legislation is the result of such a law. It allows of no consideration of existing laws and conditions, and the effect the proposed law will have on them.

"The proposed law is unnecessary. No law, of any merit, ever failed to find a member of the legislature both willing and glad to introduce it for consideration.

"The Initiative and Referendum deprive us of the legislative forum. They forbid any amendment to the form of the law as initiated. A final and perfect form of law comes only after free discussion and amendment, yet this is denied us by the above direct legislation act.

"The percentage required for the carrying of a measure by Initiative and Referendum is unwise and wrong. Instead of requiring a majority of the votes cast in the particular election, it only requires a majority of the votes cast on the specific measure; provided, that the vote cast upon such measure shall equal one-third of the total votes cast at such election. In other words, 17 per cent of the total vote at any election may make a law for the whole people. This is another proof of minority rule.

"The two propositions of Initiative and Referendum should be voted upon separately and not jointly as it will be presented to the voters on November 5. Many believe in one, and not the other and are entitled to express their opinion.

"Safely 90 per cent of the voters of the State of Washington have never seen a copy of the law nor read it. It is unjust to vote on so important an issue in such evident ignorance.